DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 063 795 EM 010 012

AUTHOR Hilliard, Robert L.
TITLE Television in Education: For Which Century?
INSTITUTION Federal Communications Commission, Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE 3 Apr 67
NOTE 8p.; Speech presented to the Department of Audio-Visual Instruction (now AECT) Annual Convention (Atlantic City, New Jersey, April 3, 1967)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS College Curriculum; *Educational Change; *Educational Technology; Instructional Media; *Instructional Television; Self Actualization; Speeches; Student Development; Student Evaluation; Teaching Methods

ABSTRACT

Television has been used too much as a classroom aid--practitioners have been content to pervert the new media with old, harmful uses when the new media could be used to change education. If a medium can have as great an impact upon the communicant and the communicator as does the content conveyed, then the modern media are not just tools divorced from learning and teaching, but are part of the process. Teachers should be freed from functions which machines can perform, and students should be freed to devote time to their fulfillment as non-mechanized human beings. Education today, however, is set up to encourage competition so that students have little choice but to become mechanized storage and retrieval systems. Education itself must change to properly accommodate the effects of the new technology: mass communications should be a required curriculum, standardized testing should be abolished, each student should be provided for learning, independent study should be encouraged, and all student experiences and development should be part of education's responsibility. (RH)

ED 063795

F-FCC
EM

ADDRESS TO THE SEVENTEENTH ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AUDIO-VISUAL INSTRUCTION OF THE NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

April 3, 1967, Convention Hall, Atlantic City, New Jersey

"TELEVISION IN EDUCATION: FOR WHICH CENTURY?"

by

Dr. Robert L. Hilliard

Chief, Educational Broadcasting Branch, Federal Communications Commission
Executive Vice-chairman, Committee for the Full Development of the Instructional Television Fixed Service
Chairman, Federal Interagency Broadcast Committee

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

(The comments in this paper are Dr. Hilliard's own as a private individual and do not necessarily reflect the endorsement or approval of the Federal Communications Commission, the Committee for the Full Development of the Instructional Television Fixed Service, or the Federal Interagency Broadcast Committee.)

EM 010 018

(FOLLOWING OPENING REMARKS:)

(I propose to discuss with you today some areas of communications and education that are not part of the regulatory duties of the FCC and, accordingly, my comments are my own as a private individual and do not necessarily reflect FCC endorsement or approval.)

(I am here ostensibly to talk about what the future of ITV will be. More accurately, however, I should talk about whether there ought to be a future for ITV--as we know it today.)

The Phillistines are right, you know. We come to conventions like this to reassure ourselves that our cause is just and our motives pure. It helps us avoid facing the truths that--even though for the wrong reasons--the Phillistines in our own communities bait us with the rest of the year. That ITV, that the other electronic media we work with, are wasteful frills.

In their own neanderthal way they are right. Right in that we have permitted the media to be used as frills, as reinforcement, as enrichment, as something to fit into and reinforce outdated, horrifying philosophies and approaches to learning and teaching.

What have we done with television, with the other technology at our disposal? Have we used them to achieve what education and learning can be? Or have we allowed, for example, for TV to be used as a teaching aid? Another aid on top of another aid, all contributing to a perpetuation of miseducation. We continue to make the content (and, indeed, the form) of ITV the content and form of the 19th Century classroom. We continue to let the media be used as passive tools, reinforcing the old, rather than creating and stimulating the new.

Almost 40 years ago Gilbert Seldes commented on the future of the still-to-come television. It will, like all previous media, he said, drain off the cheap and accidental elements of its preceding medium, in this case radio. More recently Marshall McLuhan has been saying the same thing, that the content of a new medium is the content of the preceding one, with minor modifications. Let me suggest something even further, that we have been content to pervert our new media, in and out of education, with old, harmful uses and that it is with us, the practitioners, that the responsibility lies. If we were to have the courage of our convictions and if our convictions were as courageous as we sometimes feel and say they are, we would use these new media not to reflect the "what is" of education, but to affect it.

Is it at all possible that the media are more significant than simply as content carriers? That they are important to the participant, the communicant, through the effect of the medium itself? Ever since the first human sang the first song or danced the first dance or painted the first picture on the wall of a cave to communicate to another human we have known that a medium, in and of itself, has at least as great an impact upon the communicant and the communicator as does the content conveyed.

This means far more than what we are doing today. It means more than using machines. It means that modern media--ITV--are not just tools divorced from learning and teaching, but are part of the entire process. It means changing education so that the best learning can occur because there are machines.

I am sure you would agree-by the very fact that you are at this convention and in this room--that it is educationally blasphemous, economically corrupt and slanderous to human dignity and capability to permit a student to be taught such things as parts of speech, factual information, language memorization and drill by a live teacher in a classroom--when that kind of teaching can be done at least as effectively by currently available educational media, enabling the instructor to be free to work with the students in their thinking, in their aesthetic development, in their moral growth. We should at least have enough respect for our teachers to grant that they can do things beyond that which machines can do, and we should cease using them as though they were machines. We should free our youth in the classroom from the excess time needed for factual learning so that they may devote that time to their fulfillment as non-mechanized human beings; not memorizing, but creating; as people with minds that do not store information, but apply it; as living things with feelings and imaginations to take the mundane and make them beautiful and meaningful for themselves and for all the world.

But something more is needed before this generally accepted approach can be effectuated and effective. Are you also prepared to agree that the orientation of our schools today is too often misanthropic? The track system, the honors class, the Ivy League college preparation, the regents examination, the higher and higher grades--than the next fellow. Education today, out of the side of one mouth, keeps insisting that there is some value in learning for its own sake, for an individual's personal growth and self-realization for his own development

as a thinking, creative human being. And with another mouth education sets up a system which tries to motivate the student toward automaton learning, memorizing more and more materials to spit back as machines, out of fear and pressure of not doing as well as the next fellow on whatever standardized mechanical storage and retrieval system of robot-like-teacher-fed and robot-like-student-swallowed-and-regurgitated information measurements we call examinations.

I assure you, computers can do better.

We stopped being horses when we invented the plow hitch. Are we going to continue to make our students into computers or are we going to provide for their use the computers and whatever other modern technology will free them for their fullest achievements as human beings with some true feeling and motivation for learning?

Have the curriculum and administrative techniques and learning procedures been reorganized and changed in your school system or college to meet modern needs and take advantage of modern potentials? What a debilitating rhetorical question!

Even such simple, necessary concepts as the following six points are being rejected by those who do not or will not recognize that administration and curriculum, that education itself must change to properly accomodate the effects of the new technology:

1. A required curriculum in mass communications on the college level, for all students and particularly for majors in education. (In the mid-1960's the average college graduate devoted more time per week watching television and listening to radio then doing anything else except sleeping and possibly working.)

2. Abolition of information, IQ and standard achievement tests for admission and evaluation of work. (In the mid-1960's, it seems to be clear that standard testing does not measure the creative abilities and propensities of the student and, in fact, discriminates against the creative person, favoring the one with the retentive memory.) Lauding the accumulation of information--that is, the person who gets the highest grades on most examinations throughout an educational career--seems ludicrous when one considers that if this is the goal of education, a computer indeed can do it better.

3. A technological-complex carrel for every student, providing a combination visual-audio-tactile-sensory experience of anything that may be of value to that student's individual and group in the learning-creating process.

4. Bringing as many teachers, demonstrations, events, experiences as necessary to the student (and the student to the source) within the same time-session, to provide the learner with the best available materials to bring full force to bear on that moment of learning. This can be done through many means, multi-team teaching and communications media, among others.

5. Freeing the student from attendance requirements, giving up the sacredness of the restrictive classroom, and permitting, encouraging, motivating and guiding independent study and learning.

6. Making as part of the curriculum--or, more accurately, expanding the concept of the curriculum to include--all experiences of the student in relation to the college or university, the high school, the elementary school. For example, standards of journalism in

publishing the college newspaper; standards of academic integrity in relation to the now proliferated discriminatory, anti-democratic social organizations on most campuses; elementary concepts of dating sex, life and self-realization. It is much easier, of course, for educational institutions and educators to continue to assume responsibility for only part of the learning of the student, and to continue to abdicate their responsibility in things critical to the child's or student's development which may be controversial in nature.

These are only a few examples of many that pertain to the colleges and universities and elementary and secondary schools of the 1960's, virtually all of these educational institutions and their practitioners constantly conferencing, internally and externally, in a serious search to raise the quality of education, and relatively few of them ready to move out of the stage of discussion into actually putting available and needed methods into effect.

I am reminded of Bernard Shaw's comment on Savanarola, that when he told the ladies of Florence to destroy their jewels and fine clothes they hailed him as a Saint, but when he actually induced them to do it they burned him at the stake as a public nuisance.

I will say it again: too many of us have been content to fit the media with which we work into the old, inutile, dreary anti-teaching and anti-learning patterns of education. Too many of us have been content to prostitute that which we supposedly hold in great respect on the premise that to have <u>some</u> use of the media is better than none, no matter how far short it may fall of its potential and its greatness, no matter how much it may have contributed to the continuance of teaching

and learning that is inimical to the child's intellectual, emotional and creative growth. We have been content to give administrations, and parents and teachers groups, and school boards the false notion--and, in many cases, the excuse--that because there is a TV receiver in the classroom that they are using ITV, that they are really making use of modern media in education, that they are really doing something about the pitiful, degenerative state of most education in this country today.

It is gratuitous to say that what we should be doing at conventions such as this is to solidify joint, cooperative plans for satellite use, for laser use, for use of holography in terms of updated and, if necessary, revolutionized educational processes all over the country. Our efforts should not be toward technology, but, first, to education. (I expect that there are many here who have not yet heard of holography--a new photo technique that projects a three dimensional view in color so that you can walk to one corner of the image and peer around it and it is indistinguishable from the original except that the living objects in it do not move. (How sad it is to think that years from now we will probably be meeting at conventions to try to determine how to fit holography into the traditional pattern of four-wall teaching of our educational systems--too late and for inadequate education--when we should have the organization and impetus no later than this Thursday afternoon!)

How long, o' educators, how long--before we stop orienting the child's learning and the teacher's teaching to the ease of our outmoded administrative procedures and the platitudes of our outdated philosophy and curricula, before we begin to serve the students in terms of learning and teaching potentials and techniques of the world we live in today and the world they will live in tomorrow!